(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

Air facilities in Uttarakhand

†113. SHRI BHAGAT SINGH KOSHYARI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) by when the civil aviation facilities would be provided in Uttarakhand having a number of tourist spots situated in inaccessible areas on the line of other States *viz.* North-Eastern region and Jammu and Kashmir as well as in Nepal where such facilities have immensely contributed in the region;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) At present, Dehradun is the only operational airport in Uttarakhand. Scheduled air services are available to/from Dehradun as per the following details:

Kingfisher Airlines

Delhi-Dehradun-Delhi	ATR42	14 flights/week

Dehradun airport is suitable for operation of A-320 type of aircraft and Pantnagar airport is suitable for operation of ATR type of aircraft. Construction of new terminal building at Dehradun is likely to be completed by April, 2009.

At present Pawan Hans Helicopter Ltd. (PHHL) is also providing helicopter services in Uttarakhand, PHHL provides connectivity to Kedarnath Dham during the season. PHHL has constructed a helipad at Phatta for helicopter services to Kedarnath and is also operating from Augustmuni for Kedarnath services. PHHL has constructed a hangar at Gauchar air field for helicopter services in Uttarakhand.

Government has laid down route dispersal guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services taking into account the need for air transport services of different regions of the country. It is, however, up to the airlines to provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability. As such, the airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance of route dispersal guidelines issued by Government.

Losses incurred due to fog affected flights

†114. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is incurring huge losses due to cancellation and delay in flights because of fog;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps being taken by Government to deal with this problem; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to do justice with passengers in such situation?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Due to visibility falling below operating minima during fog, many a time flights get delayed/cancelled with consequential losses. Some airlines do not maintain details related to delays due to 'landing restrictions' or late clearance for take off. It is, therefore, not possible to compute loss on this count.

(c) In accordance with ICAO guidelines, Airports Authority of India (AAI) has already installed CAT III B ILS at IGI airport, New Delhi, which permits operation of aircraft up to Runway Visual Range [RVR] of 50 meters which can be used by airlines with certified pilots. All airlines are directed/encouraged to plan their operations with aircrafts and pilots capable of operating under such low visibility conditions. In addition, Instrument Landing Systems (ILS) have also been installed at 42 other airports to enable aircraft operation in low visibility conditions.

(d) The passengers are informed by the airlines in advance about rescheduling of flights due to fog. In case of cancellations, passengers are given option to either take refund or avail next available flight. Light refreshments are provided to the passengers in case of delays beyond two hours.

Infrastructural facilities at minor airports

115. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any move to develop the infrastructural facilities at minor airports;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the financial allocations for them with the time-frame for execution of the project;

(c) the status of airports at Uchipuli in Ramanathapuram District, Tamil Nadu; and

(d) whether it is not a fact that Uchipuli is a most backward place but a vital link and very much closer to Rameswaram and Sri Lanka and deserving to attain priority and importance in taking up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir. AAI has undertaken upgradation and modernization of 35 non-metro airports in the country. In addition, 13 more airports have also been taken up for upgradation.

(b) Runway expansion/Restrengthening works has been undertaken at Vijaywada, Dibrugarh, Silchar, Kullu, Jammu, Bhopal, Khajuraho, Aurangabad, Gondia, Puducherry, Amritsar, Udaipur, Madurai, Trichy, Agartala, Varanasi, Dehradun, Pantnagar and Cooch Behar airports while apron expansion works have been undertaken at Port Blair, Vijayawada, Dibrugarh, Silchar, Ranchi, Vadodra, Surat, Gagal, Kullu, Jammu, Raipur, Khajuraho, Bhopal, Aurangabad, Akola, Belgaum, Gondia, Imphal, Dimapur, Hubli, Puducherry, Amritsar, Udaipur, Madurai, Trichy, Agartala, Varanasi, Agra, Dehradun and Cooch Behar airports. Terminal Building expansion/construction works have been undertaken at Chandigarh, Ranchi, Vadodra, Rajkot, Kullu, Jammu, Raipur, Agatti, Bhopal, Khajuraho, Aurangabad, Gondia, Imphal, Amritsar, Udaipur, Madurai, Trichy, Varanasi, Dehradun, Pantnagar and Cooch Behar airports.

The infrastructure both on the air side and city side for the above non-metro airports is to be developed in a phased manner. AAI has made a provision of Rs.6,443 crores for the development of non-metro airports during the XI Five Year Plan period.